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## APPENDIX A – TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

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### TRAVEL MANAGEMENT DECISION MAKING CRITERIA AND ROUTE EVALUATION PROCESS USED BY BLM INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

(Refer to attached Written Criteria, Evaluation Worksheets, and Final Evaluation Table for the Helena Travel Planning Area)

The Butte Field Office Interdisciplinary Team developed an organized, systematic process to conduct route by route analysis for each of the 9 identified travel planning areas. Utilizing this process, each route was evaluated to determine its future management status as either Open, Open/With Restrictions, Closed, or Decommissioned.

Evaluations were conducted by analyzing three identified key Resource categories (Wildlife/Habitat, Aquatics/Fisheries, and Soils), and then comparing the *level of impacts* to those resources to the *level of importance* for Human Use. Six key Human Uses categories were identified. They are: Public Use (recreation, hunting, woodcutting, etc.), Wild-land Prescribed Fire, Forest Management, Mineral/Energy Development, and Range Management. Although the process provided separate analysis for Resource impacts, but combined the Human Use analysis, each was considered equally important and “weighted” the same during comparative analysis.

In addition to it’s route by route analysis, the Interdisciplinary Team reviewed and consulted the public scoping comments (issues/concerns, potential solutions) generated during a series of public travel planning meetings. The public comments provided useful information for site specific route evaluation as well as help set overall context for each travel planning area.

In order to provide a repeatable, systematic approach, Interdisciplinary Team members developed written criteria, with a range of numerical values (e.g., 0, 3, 6, 9), for use with each Resource and Human Use Worksheet. For Resource impact analysis, a numerical value of 0 indicates “No Impact”, while a numerical value of 9 indicates a “High level of Impact”. For Human Use analysis, a numerical value of 0 indicates “No Importance” to human use, while a numerical value of 9 indicates a “High Level of Importance” to human use.

As each Resource or Human Use specialist completed their route evaluation, the numerical values were entered on the respective Evaluation Worksheets and tabulated, and a final “rating” of Low, Medium, or High was assigned to each route. The Low, Medium, and High ratings were derived by tabulating the maximum numerical value achieved during the analysis, and then dividing the total into thirds to arrive at the Low Medium, and High rating.

For an example, refer to the written Wildlife/Habitat Criteria and Evaluation Worksheet for the Helena Travel Planning Area. In this case, 7 Wildlife/Habitat criteria were identified for the Helena TPA, each with a range of numerical values. The total *possible* maximum numerical value for these 7 criteria is 52; however, assume the highest numerical value actually achieved was 36. To determine the rating for Low, Medium, or High, divide 36 into thirds (divide by 3). The results are as follows:

- Low = 0-12
- Medium = 13-24
- High = 25-36

Continuing with this example, assume that for a particular route, the following numerical values have been determined and entered on the worksheet:

- Big Game Habitat = 6
- Unique Habitats = 0
- Fragmentation of Habitat = 6
- Connectivity = 0
- Noxious Weeds = 4
- Relict Plant Communities = 0
- Special Status Plant Species and Habitats = 3

In this case, the numerical total for this route is 17, and will receive a rating of “Medium”.

This is the same methodology that was used to complete the Aquatics/Fisheries, Soils, and Human Use route evaluations and ratings throughout the process.

After the Resource and Human Use analysis was completed for a travel planning area, the final ratings (Low, Medium, or High) for each route were entered onto the *Final Evaluation Table*. The Final Evaluation Table provides a format to compare the Resource Impact and Human Use ratings determined for each route for the particular travel planning area. The Final Evaluation Table includes a space for written comments to clarify the Interdisciplinary Team’s proposed management decisions.

As an example, assume the following final ratings for a particular route:

- Wildlife/Habitat Impact Rating – Low
- Aquatics/Fisheries Impact Rating – Low
- Soils Impact Rating – Medium
- Human Use Rating – High

For this example, the overall level of Resource impacts is Low, while the overall level of importance to Human Use is High. In this case, the ID team would likely propose to manage the route as Open, or perhaps Open/Restricted (seasonal restrictions) if Soil erosion were an issue. For a different route, the overall level of Resource Impacts might be High, while the overall importance to Human Use might be low; resulting in an Interdisciplinary Team proposal for Closure. In the above examples, there are no conflicts between the Resource Impact and Human Use ratings.

However, a wide range of variations for Resource/Human Use ratings is possible, and in some cases required discussion and negotiation by the Interdisciplinary Team to arrive at a proposed management decision. For example, there were a number of routes where Resource Impacts and Human Use needs both rated out as High. These situations required group discussion and negotiation in order to arrive at a proposed management solution.

#### **Community Based Collaborative Working Groups**

During spring 2004, BLM identified and prioritized 9 site specific areas needing travel planning. 5 of the 9 areas were identified as High Priority, and are being addressed concurrently with the RMP revision. The remaining 4 areas were identified as Moderate Priority, and will need to be addressed after the RMP, due to time constraints.

- 1) Helena (focus area- Scratchgravel Hills) - *High Priority*
- 2) East Helena (focus area- North Hills) - *High Priority*
- 3) Lewis and Clark Country Northwest (focus area- Marysville) - *High Priority*
- 4) Boulder/Jefferson City - *High Priority*
- 5) Upper Big Hole River - *High Priority*
- 6) Missouri River Foothills - *Moderate Priority*
- 7) Jefferson County Southeast - *Moderate Priority*
- 8) Broadwater County South - *Moderate Priority*
- 9) Park/Gallatin - *Moderate Priority*

Given their relative importance, a series of public scoping meetings were held for the 5 *High Priority* travel planning area during November and December 2004, and January 2005. The primary purpose of the meetings was to solicit site specific issues and concerns,

as well as potential solutions; to be used to help establish criteria governing decisions for travel planning. (e.g., issue/concern – noise/dust impacts from motorized OHV use near housing area ; solution – restrict/prohibit OHV use near housing area, establish minimum distance, criteria – establish/determine minimum distance from housing areas ).

During the meetings, it became apparent that three of the travel planning areas - Lewis and Clark County Northwest (Marysville), Helena (Scratchgravel Hills), and East Helena (North Hills) were particularly important to the public and travel planning. Meetings for these 3 areas were well attended; interest in the Scratchgravel Hills required a second meeting.

Given the level of public interest, BLM decided to solicit the assistance of three community-based collaborative working groups, one for each travel planning area. Assisted in part by Tetra Tech (RMP contractor), the groups would work under the direct supervision and guidance of the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC).

Several press releases and letters of interest were issued by Tetra Tech during May 2005, soliciting applicants for each of the 3 travel planning areas. The mission of the collaborative working groups was to “assist in developing a travel management plan mutually agreeable to both the collaborative working groups and BLM”. Membership criteria included: Montana residency, familiarity with the travel planning area(s), and a willingness to work collaboratively with people of differing viewpoints. In addition, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act Members (FACA), members were selected from 3 different interest categories in order to provide for balanced representation.

BLM anticipated enough public interest to support 3 balanced working groups, composed of either 6 or 9 people total. Tetra Tech was tasked with selecting group membership (for subsequent approval by the RAC), and coordinating and facilitating all of the group meetings.

In late May, however, it became apparent that the RAC would not be able to sponsor the collaborative subgroups, due to time constraints and other unforeseen events. BLM contacted the Lewis and Clark County commissioners, who graciously agreed to sponsor the collaborative working groups under their direct guidance and supervision.

Due to a shortage of interested candidates, only 2 (rather than 3) balanced collaborative working groups were able to be selected, each composed of 9 members. Given its group membership, interest, and local knowledge, one of the groups was tasked with assisting the BLM develop travel management for both the Helena (Scratchgravel Hills) travel planning area as well as the East Helena (North Hills) travel planning area, while the second

group was selected to assist the BLM with the Lewis and Clark travel planning area (Marysville).

Michael McHugh, the Lewis and Clark County land planner, represented the county and chaired both working groups throughout the process. Each group held a series of 6 meetings during June and July, 2005. Each meeting was assisted by Tetra Tech, and attended by BLM staff that answered questions and provided and information feedback from the BLM's Interdisciplinary Team as needed. In addition, BLM provided a full range of maps and other travel planning information used by its own interdisciplinary travel planning team, including its preliminary travel planning recommendations for each of the 3 travel areas. (See list of supportive documents on page 2 of "Guidance for BLM Travel Planning Subgroups").

Group decisions were based on consensus. In the end, the working groups were able to arrive at complete consensus for the Marysville and North Hills areas, but only partial consensus for the Scratchgravel Hills area.

From August 2005-October 2005, the BLM Interdisciplinary team met and developed a range of alternatives (A-D) for each of the 5 travel planning area. With the exception of some minor changes, the community based collaborative working group proposals were incorporated under Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative.

#### **Butte Field Office Travel Plan Variance Process/Application Form**

Travel plan variances are requests by the public, commercial interests, interagency personnel, or BLM personnel to temporarily use motorized vehicles on closed roads, seasonally restricted roads, and cross country (off road) use. The following process has been developed to address requests for motorized travel not

already authorized by a prior decision based on analysis in an existing EIS, EA, or the provisions of a permit, lease, memorandum of understanding, or right of way. It is also intended to provide additional oversight for uses already generally authorized under the 2003 Statewide OHV ROD and Instruction Memorandum #MT-2001-004 regarding administrative uses.

Variance requests that cannot be approved due to issues raised during review would be subject to the NEPA process, or Documentation of NEPA adequacy (DNA). A DNA is documentation of whether or not there is existing NEPA documentation to cover the proposal. If the variance request cannot pass this "test", additional NEPA documentation is required.

The process is initiated by the program lead requesting the variance, or who has received a request from the public. After completing the basic information on the variance form, the flow chart should be circulated among the respective specialists for consultation and overall review.

Example requests for variances include (but are not limited to):

- Access to private property (patented mine claim, mining claim location and assessment work, seasonal cabin)
- Casual use mineral exploration (refer to 43 CFR 3809.5)
- Permit lease administration (firewood collection, recreation)
- Agency administrative work
- Contract work or contract administration
- Other permit leases

**Flowchart**

(Please document your responses, as needed, in the space next to the question. Use “N/A” for issues and concerns not applicable to the request).

Does the request provide reasonable use of public lands? — **No-----No Variance**  
*Must be Yes to continue*

Yes

Are there reasonable, alternative routes available? — **Yes-----No Variance**  
*Must be No to continue*

No

Is the activity in a WSA?  
(Exceptions – Grandfathered rights, valid existing rights, use of an existing way) — **Yes-----No Variance**  
*Must be No to continue*

No

Is the road safe to use during the requested time period? — **No-----No Variance**  
*Must be Yes to continue*

Yes

Can the activity be postponed until the road or area is open to motorized use? — **Yes -----No Variance**  
*Must be No to continue*

No

Can resource impacts be sufficiently mitigated?  
(Winter range, spring calving habitat, Threatened and Endangered species habitat, sensitive species habitat, sensitive soils, soils susceptible to erosion, water quality, spread of noxious weeds, etc.) — **No-----No Variance**  
*Must be Yes to continue*

Yes

Can social conflicts (as analyzed) be sufficiently mitigated? — **No ----- No Variance**  
*Must be Yes to continue*

Yes

**Yes – Variance may be approved by Authorized Officer** (refer to Variance Request Form for signature)

**Respective Program Reviewers:**

<b>Program Lead</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
CULTURAL		
FORESTRY		
REALTY		
WILDLIFE/T&E		
GEOLOGY		
SOIL/WATER/AIR		
HAZMAT/AML		
RANGE/WEEDS		
RECREATION/WILDERNESS/VRM		
RIPARIAN		
FIRE/FUELS		
TRAVEL MANAGEMENT		

USDI BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Butte Field Office  
106 North Parkmont, Butte, Montana, 59701  
Telephone 406-533-7600

Authorization No. \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZATION FOR MOTORIZED USE OF ROAD, TRAIL, OR AREA WITH TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

When approved by the authorized officer, this permit authorizes:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State) (Zip)

Telephone Number (s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(List additional authorized users on back of form)

To use the following road (s), trails, or area with travel restrictions (indicate entry locations and travel areas):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In order to conduct the following operations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dates/Time of Use:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number and Type(s) of Vehicles:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(See other side)

**Standard Stipulations**

Copy of variance to be kept with authorized vehicle (s) and displayed in window.

Variance restricted to authorized (listed) individuals only

Permittee shall notify BLM of any changes under this authorization

Post sign or notice (on gate or beginning of restricted road) stating reason for use. Close/Lock gates when entering and leaving closure area

Vehicle use limited to ingress and egress only, using the authorized route, and minimum number of vehicles and trips.

No off road travel allowed, unless specifically authorized under this variance.

Avoid wet areas; travel only when ground is dry to prevent ruts and resulting erosion

Wash vehicles prior to use on BLM lands to prevent introduction of weeds

*During fire operations* - May use ATVs and engines on any existing road or trail that accesses treatment area. Off road use restricted for fire holding, mop up, and any related suppression needs. Off road vehicle use should be avoided during the general rifle hunting season. No new trails are to be created

*During hunting season* - Vehicles shall not be used for hunting purposes on BLM lands. Use limited to ingress/egress only after dark or between the hours of 11 AM to 3 PM (with the exception of emergencies).

I (we) acknowledge that I (we) am (are) required to comply with any conditions or stipulations of the authorized officer when the permit is issued:

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(Applicant signature/date)

**Butte Field Office Manager Action**

**Special Stipulations (if any):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Variance Approved

This application is hereby approved subject to the Standard stipulations and Special stipulations (if any) listed above:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature/date)

\_\_\_\_\_ Variance Denied

This application has been denied for the following reasons:

See attached letter.

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4, and the enclosed Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office (at the above address) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition (request) pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 8342 for a stay (suspension) of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.